

anything on the river. London Bridge was at that time one of the wonders of the world. Its two parapets were rows of houses. It was a street containing a fine church. The thirteenth opening from the northern shore was a drawbridge that could be raised to let ships pass below, and to stop thoroughfare above. This gap was further commanded by a strong tower, on the top of which traitors' heads were exposed on pikes. Sir Thomas Wyatt and his army were, in Queen Mary's reign, kept by this simple device on the Surrey side, and there might Wat Tyler have been kept in 1381. The fate of the nation hung on the hinges of that drawbridge. If it could be held up for a few days longer, the head of the rebellion would be broken, the Court free, the government again in communication with the country.<sup>1</sup>

The Mayor, Walworth, and the Corporation were strongly on the side of law and order. Indeed, as the King and ministers were now lodging at the Tower, the municipal officers were under the eye of government. It would have been impossible for them to plead, like the governing bodies of other towns, that they supposed the King to be on the side of the rebels. Walworth decided to guard the bridge and to send to the peasants bidding them, in the names of the King and the city together, come no nearer to London. A committee of three aldermen rode out to Blackheath to deliver the message. Two of them, Adam Carlyll and John Fresh, faithfully performed their mission. But the third alderman, named John Horn, separated himself from his two colleagues, conferred apart with the rebel leaders, and exhorted them to march on London at once, for they would be received with acclamations into the city. Such was the strength of the rebel party within the walls, that even after this treachery Horn did not fear to return. Indeed he brought in with him several of the peasants, and lodged them that night in his house; he even went so far as to visit Walworth and advise him to admit the mob. He would himself, he said, be surety for its good behaviour.

Meanwhile, encouraged by Horn's advice, and disgusted at the failure of the conference at Eotherhithe, the rebels the

<sup>1</sup> H. R., 514 ; Jusserand's *Vie nomade*, 14<sup>Wn</sup>»« \$i&cl& 20.